

In the Specification:

Please amend paragraph [0013] on page 3 as follows:

Fig. 2 shows a test structure undergoing testing in one embodiment of the invention. The test structure is coupled to a voltage source 201, which provides the stress voltage that accelerates the breakdown of the test structure. The test structure comprises a dielectric layer ~~204~~ ~~202~~ grown on a substrate ~~202~~ ~~204~~. The test structure comprises, for example, a layer of oxide (e.g., silicon oxide) grown on a silicon substrate. In one embodiment, a gate electrode 206 is formed on the oxide layer. The thickness of the dielectric layer is, for example, less than about 3.4nm. The area of the test structure (e.g., capacitor) is typically about 0.01mm^2 or smaller. Other types of test structures with other areas are also useful. In one embodiment, the current through the test structure is monitored during the testing to detect a significant increase in current, which may indicate a dielectric breakdown.